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THE
BELFAST MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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COMMUNICATIONS, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

MY father was once a wealthy silk merchant in Dublin. In my girlish days my spirits were great and every prospect seemed doubly charming. I was often told that my father was the richest man in the city. My present affluence charmed me and my future prospects were an inexhaustible fund of pleasure to my aspiring mind. I was often told by my servant what a fine girl I would be, "and really Miss you are almost as big as myself." Thus was I poisoned, my mind being weak. Small might be the portion of flattery to induce me to take all those airs to which I thought my father's only daughter was entitled to. I had two brothers younger by many years than myself: my poor mother died with anxiety when she had buried four beautiful daughters: I was admired by my father, and flattery became familiar to my ear while it poisoned my heart. At my fourteenth year I was sent to a fashionable boarding school in London, as my father said that his Maria should not be educated in Ireland. I was dazzled with the variety of all I saw, and every thing I did, however ridiculous, was applauded. I was so presumptuous as to think, when I heard of many great houses in Dublin failing, that it was impossible for my father to be reduced to that situation.

Delighted and seemingly delighting others, I one morning observed a change amongst my companions: they seemed as if they caught the disease one from another: they were cool and every foolish thing I said and did was no longer laughed at. I went to my governess, she had the newspaper in her hand and informed me of my father's house stopping payment. This downfall was so unexpected it al-

most broke my heart. I received a letter next morning, all my gay expectations were blasted, my father had lost a great deal, and his debts were great; I went home; the disappointment plunged me into a fever. I recovered my health along with a deep repentance for my folly and pride, and I shuddered to think I had ever the presumption to suppose I was out of the reach of misfortune. This event has humbled me, and I trust it is one of the greatest favours that the All-merciful has bestowed on one of the most ignorant of his creatures.

M. S.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,
THE following description of a *lusus naturæ*, which, as far as I have heard, is of a very uncommon nature, will not, perhaps, be unacceptable to some of your readers.

A gentleman of the county of Down, some time since, being at breakfast in a farm-house, a goose-egg of very large size was laid on the table; on his remarking it, he was told that it had been laid by a goose which frequently laid eggs with a double yolk. On opening it with this expectation, he was surprised with a phenomenon still more singular. Within the white of the egg, which was very thin at the end that was broken, was a second perfect egg, covered with a shell in every respect resembling the outer one, so that it has every appearance of a small egg artificially introduced into a larger. The inner egg remains unbroken; and I am informed that it has been preserved, and sent to a gentleman in Dublin, who is engaged in making a collection of natural and artificial curiosities.

I should be glad to know whether a

A

similar phenomenon has occurred to any other of your Correspondents. I am,
Sir, Yours, T.T.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

I AM a plain man, a farmer in the country, and am blessed with a notable wife and six fine children, all healthy and well-looking. They had always the example of seeing me and my wife behave in the same manner one day as another, minding our business so as to provide for them, and never wasting time either in reading, writing, or the like.—First, I make bold to tell you of my eldest daughter taking it in her head she would make songs or verses, which pleased us all mightily at first; indeed no one was more touched with her pretty little jingle than myself, never thinking it would come to any harm. At first she made verses only now and then, when any thing particular came across me, or the neighbours; but soon she could never stop writing, nor would she do any thing that would turn to any account, which made me think it was time to stop praising her writing; and besides, I must own, I was not touched as I used to be, partly owing to the wearisome length of her verses, and partly owing to my being so vexed at her doing nothing else. I am sorry to say that my wife continued to praise her, and was quite proud of her abilities, as she called them; but I was much prouder of my second daughter, who never ceased working, either at her needle, or about the house, for which I constantly praised her: but I find that praise is as bad for the one as the other. Betty, my second daughter, gets up at four in the morning, to disturb all the family, and to tire herself before bed-time, and if not praised for it, she is so sulky, I had rather see her idle. Now, I write this, to consult about my third daughter, who seems to have some taste for reading, whether I had better not let her ever open a book; or, would you advise me to let her read a little, and work a little? and if I find she does more of one than the other, I will, with your advice, check her for it. As to my three boys, I will consult you

about them when I have more time; at present I am very busy, having manure to spread, and my children to scold. S.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

YOUR correspondent, T. in your last number, appears angry at me for my remarks on the character of Sterne. It is to be regretted, that writers, when they differ, do not refrain from indulging in the spirit of controversy. He accuses me, and another writer in your Magazine, under the title of "*a Lover of simplicity of character*," of violating candour, and writing from prejudice against Sterne. I might also accuse him of prejudice in favour of Sterne, and of entertaining a resolution not to have the bandage, put on in the days of his youth, removed from his eyes, that he might see the deformity in those writings; and if I were inclined to retort, I might charge him with betraying the cause of decency in the support of his favourite author. But I will not allow myself to suspect the purity of his intentions. I have no inclination to prolong the controversy respecting Sterne, but am willing to let the cause go to the tribunal of the public, for their verdict on the evidence already adduced; but in my reply, at the closing of the case, I may be allowed to avail myself of the admission of the opposite counsellor, who, like an honest advocate employed in a bad cause, grants all I want, in the following candid concession: "Not that I mean to say, that it is an unexceptionable production, or that there are not many passages in his books, or rather in this one (*Friar Shandy*, and his *Sentimental Journey*) which would have been better omitted. His wit often led him to use expressions, *that excite the imagination of his readers in a way not favourable to the government of the passions.*" Here I rest my cause, with the further remarks, that the passions are sufficiently inflammable, and require not the spark of licentious wit to set fire to the train: that this disguised system of sensuality is at least as dangerous to youth as more open obscenity, which disgusts by its